MAKING WAVES

GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE
CITIES INITIATIVE
L'ALLIANCE DES VILLES
DES GRANDS LACS ET DU SAINT-LAURENT

U.S. Election and Policy Update

On December 23, 2022, President Biden signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which includes the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2022. WRDA 2022 enacts several changes to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) policies and projects that were supported by the Cities Initiative, including the adjustment of the federal/local cost-share requirement to 90/10 for the Brandon Road Interbasin Project, which is intended to prevent an established presence of invasive carp in the Great Lakes.



Sen. Tammy Duckworth (IL), the Chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife and a key figure in the development of WRDA 2022.

Additionally, on December 23, 2022, the U.S. House of Representatives approved the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY23, paving the way for President Biden to sign the legislation into law and completing the legislative work of the 117th Congress. The Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY23 includes $368 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), $3 million for the Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study, and $47.88 million for the Brandon Road Interbasin Project.

Meanwhile, the 2022 midterm elections delivered the result anticipated by most observers – divided government in 2023 and 2024, the final two years of President Biden's current term. Republicans narrowly regained control of the House whereas Democrats narrowly maintained control of the U.S. Senate. With Republicans securing a seat at the governing table and an effective veto on the Biden Administration's legislative agenda, we are unlikely to see bipartisan cooperation and landmark legislation in the 118th Congress.

Pivoting to the year ahead, House Republicans have pledged to conduct stringent oversight of the Executive Branch's implementation of President Biden's most prominent legislative achievements, including the American Rescue Plan Act, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – the agency responsible

for implementing key parts of the IIJA and IRA, respectively – in particular could encounter substantial scrutiny from House Republicans regarding its authority to promulgate climate regulations and implement the IRA's climate provisions. It remains to be determined what impact House Republican oversight will have on EPA's ability to implement these laws effectively, efficiently, and equitably.



Rep. David Joyce (OH-14), the incoming Chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies and a longtime champion of GLRI.

Finally, several new Members of Congress will be joining the ranks of the Great Lakes Congressional Delegation in the 118th Congress, including: Rep. Jonathan Jackson (IL-01); Rep. Hillary Scholten (MI-03); Rep. John James (MI-10); Rep. Shri Thanedar (MI-13); Rep. Nick Langworthy (NY-23); Sen. J.D. Vance (OH); and Sen. John Fetterman (PA). Familiar faces who won their reelection races and will be returning in the 118th Congress include Rep. David Joyce (OH-14), Rep. Marcy Kaptur (OH-09), and Rep. Mike Gallagher (WI-08) in the House and Sen. Tammy Duckworth (IL) and Sen. Ron Johnson (WI) in the Senate. Rep. Joyce, a longtime champion of the Great Lakes, will continue to be an important ally as he prepares to assume the Chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, which oversees GLRI and other critical EPA funding.

The Cities Initiative looks forward to working with our member mayors to engage the entire Great Lakes Congressional Delegation in Washington at both our Mid-Year Meeting, from January 17-18, 2023, and Great Lakes Day, on March 9, 2023.